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THE
ENGAGE,

A DRAMA

IN TWO ACTS.

BY

JOHN WILSON ROSS.

LONDON :

E. DIPPLE, STRAND; AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

Price Sixpence.

CHARACTERS.

MEN.

General D'Enambuc - - - Lord Proprietor of Martinique.

Count de Loinvilliers.

Marquis Henri de Maubray.

Father Du Tertre.

Dr. Janson.

Cordillera - - - - - A Carib Chief.

Riccio - - - - - Captain of the Spanish Guard.

Jem Irons - - - - - A Negro.

Jack Ballard - - - - A sailor.

Old Negro.

An Engage. 1st Guard. 2nd Guard.

 A Sentinel. A Gaoler.

WOMEN.

Marie - - - - - Wife of General D'Enambuc.

Nancy Gibbs - - - - Her servant.

Betsy Braid - - - - A Negress.

An old Negress.

Negroes, Guards, Soldiers, Caribs, &c.

THE ENGAGE.

THIS drama is intended to convey an idea of some of the frightful iniquities that were practised in the French West India colonies, in consequence of a law that prevailed there for about fifty years after their first establishment, compelling poor adventurers, who had their passage paid to those islands by the West India Company, to be slaves for three years, (hence called *engages*, or *trente-six mois*.) and also forcing people who could not give a satisfactory account of their means of livelihood, to be considered *engages* by law, and to be immediately delivered up to masters.

SCENE.—(*In the first Act:*) The estate of Les Mornes. *In the second*, the Fort Saint Pierre, both in Martinique.

ERA—1657—8.

The time in each Act is that occupied in the performance:

A year and a day are supposed to elapse between the Acts.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Outside the walls of D'Enambuc's house; house decorated with flags, as if for a gala; a triumphal arch, surmounted by a transparency, in the*

centre of which is inscribed the name MARIE. Du Tertre, Riccio and others discovered looking on at a dance of Negroes, accompanied by the following

Chorus of Negroes.

Dance and join the choral lay,
Hail to Marie's natal day!
When this day each year comes round,
Hills and vales with joy resound.
Music's heard in every grove;
Every note is tun'd to love.

Hail to Marie! Long she has been
Our beloved "little queen."

Hurra! hurra! hurra!

Dance and join the choral lay,
Hail to Marie's natal day!
Grief and discord stop their voice,
All in Martinique rejoice.
Eager with their smiles to prove
For the "little queen" their love.

Hail to Marie! Long she has been
Our beloved "little queen."

Hurra! hurra! hurra!

[After the dance, the Negroes squat down, or lie at their lengths along the stage. Jem Irons retires to the back, and drawing out the tubes of a spy-glass, sweeps the horizon, as if in search of some object.]

Nancy. Well, we are all lively and cheerful to-day.

Betsy. Iss, sissy Nancy, and dis been a happy day always at Les Mornes; for it been Madame Marie's birt'day, and whenever it comes round, dere been nuttin but rejoicings, and songs, and dances, and illuminations, and bonfires.

Nancy. And to-day, Betsy, missus has had a double quantity of provisions given away all over the island, in town and country, in the workshops and factories. There has been a general pardon; nobody has been punished, and all have had tafia besides, to drink the health of our "little queen."

Jem. (looking round.) Set still, you jabbering niggers; kip your tongues within your cheeks.

Nancy. Don't meddle with us, Mr. Jem Irons, but mind your own business.

Betsy. Ki! mass' Jem, how you 'buse and cuss!

Old Negress. (to Betsy.) Lard! sisse, he gotted too much to drink of massa's rum.

Jem. (putting down his spy-glass and picking up a rope, jestingly.) Set still I say, you jabbering niggers, or by gum! I'll mak' dis cow-hide bite your backs.

[Here, seeing Nancy Gibbs, who, in the meanwhile has risen, and is leaning over, talking to a Negress, with her back turned to him, in a posture extremely seductive to his mischievous propensities, and very suitable for the practical illustration of his threat, Jem Irons winks his eye at his comrades, and, thrusting his tongue into his cheek, unhesitatingly suits the action to the word, and lashes somewhat smartly a very prominent feature of the lady's person. Thus saluted, Nancy Gibbs quickly turns round, and immediately there commences a battle, half in earnest and half in joke, amidst a roar of laughter, and these vociferations:—

Negresses. That's it, Nancy, gee it him well, ga', for tak'ing de exbantage of you.

Negroes. At her, Jemmy; now's your time, lad.

[*Inspired by the cheers, Nancy Gibbs falls to in genuine negro fashion, biting, pinching, scratching and kicking, and seeming likely to get the better of her antagonist, till, aiming a blow with her foot at Jem's posteriors, he catches her by the heel, and, just as she is losing her equilibrium, he dexterously lets go his hold, and catching her in his arms, seats her on the stage, forcibly, but gently, and by way of armistice, gallantly imprints a sounding smack on her lips.*

Old Negro. (laughing.) Oh! massa Jem, you always full of fun; you been de wag of Martinique, you been, and de favorite loper of all de gals. Cha! cha! cha! (*laughs; meanwhile Jem Irons has taken up his position as before.*) But wharra for you look at, buddee?

Jem. I dare say, now, my dare frin's, you are all bery much surprised why I have been watchin' here so long; but I have been lookin' at de bessel dat come into harbour late to-morrow. I see'd a boat jus' now come ashore wid some men. One of 'em, drest in a cocked hat and feathers, seems a bery fine buckra. Look here, my dare frin's, he is coming along de road now to Les Mornes.

[*Negroes retire to the back, and look off the stage gesticulating and ejaculating.*

Old Negro. Why, massa Jem, dat is the Count de, Loinvilliers.

Jem. None of you, now, can tell me who dat man is riding along de sea shore. You tink him English, Solomon; you, 'Cotch, Leander: as for you, Benjamin, I am bery certain you 'spec' him to be Portugee; and you, Mass' Joseph, I see by you yeye, dat you tink him Dutch, and you, Miss Nancy Gibbs, and

Miss Betsy Braid, a grinning dere, like a couple of monkeys, you t'ink him berry fine fellow no how (*winks his eye; group bursts into peals of laughter.*)

Old Negro. Oh! Massa Jem, you always so berry merry and happy; but, neber mind, we all been merry and happy to-day; eberybody been merry and happy; all ober de island; eberybody keep holiday.

Old Negress. 'Cept poor Madame Marie herself. (*shrugs her shoulders.*) No ball, no supper, no music; no serenade likewise.

Jem. But here comes missus, wid massa, de General, my dare frin's. 'Tan' up, all of you, and let us gib missus a hearty cheer. Now den.

Enter Marie and D'Enambuc.

Negroes. Hurrah! Long life to Madame! Hurah!

Negresses. God bless you, missus; may you lib long. God bless you.

Negroes. Hurra! hurra! &c.

[*D'Enambuc and Marie bow to the Negroes, who continue their shouts.*]

D'Enambuc. Marie, the people love you; I think you can reckon on their devotion and fidelity. Some of these days, you must make a tour through the whole island.

Marie. Yes; when you are restored to health, we will go together.

[*Seats herself by her husband; all retire, except Jem Irons, D'Enambuc, and Marie.*]

D'Enambuc. Jem!

Jem. Iss, Massa.

D'Enambuc. Saddle the white mule, and set off instantly fir Fort Royal, and give this letter to the Marquis, Henri de Maubray. (*hands a letter to Jem.*)

Jem. Iss, massa, I saddles de white mule at once gets on him, and off I sets. (*aside.*) But, fust of all, I must go to de sa'e, and get summut to eat, for I looks bery hungry, not having had a chaw wont' speakin' of all de mo'ning nor de afternoon n'ider.

[*Exit.*]

Marie. How sad we are to-day, when all around us are so gay ! But I hope, next year, we shall celebrate this anniversary with more cheerfulness. You seem better this evening ?

D'Enambuc. I am. These festivities and the cool breeze do me good.

Marie. I wish I could see the doctor coming along the road from Saint Pierre ; he promised me he would return before night-fall

D'Enambuc. I have no need of him. Do not fret because he is late.

Marie. This illness of yours has lasted for six months ; the pain you have suffered so long has dragged you down.

D'Enambuc. Yes, at times I have neither patience nor fortitude, and then my mind is disturbed by the state of affairs in the country. Heaven knows how things have been going on, since I have had nothing to do with them. Who knows how Gorcelas is governing in my stead ?

Marie. He is a clever man ; you chose him yourself, and up to this date, there have been no complaints against him.

D'Enambuc. How do you know, Marie, that they would tell me without fear, without prejudice, or without interested feelings what is going on ? Gorcelas has not my confidence. In appointing him my lieutenant-general, I yielded to considerations—to influences ; but if I should die, Marie, it is not he whom

I should depute to maintain your rights and Henri's; for he would not have sufficient ability, courage and disinterestedness to support here your authority, and preserve my heritage for my son. What would become of you, if you were to lose me, without my leaving you a friend, an adviser, a protector? But come, Marie, do not weep thus: all that I am now saying may, after all, be but a useless precaution. I feel better, as you see—I am well.

Marie. (*trying to restrain her tears.*) Let us return in doors; I am afraid the damp evening air will injure you.

D'Enambuc. On the contrary, it revives me. But hark! the trotting of horses, and the sentinels at the garden gate challenge.

Sentinel. (*without.*) Who goes there?

Janson. (*without.*) A friend.

Marie. It is the doctor at last, and there is some one with him.

D'Enambuc. No doubt, Loinvilliers accompanies him. 'Tis nearly a week since we have seen the Count.

Marie. You are fond of him, and I will receive him well for your sake.

Enter Loinvilliers and Janson.

I am glad to see you, Count, and you too, dear doctor. (*to Janson.*) We have been longing for your arrival.

Janson. (*to Marie.*) Yet there is no reason you should alarm yourself; our patient is progressing well.

D'Enambuc. (*taking Loinvilliers by the hand.*) My dear Loinvilliers, it is very good of you to come and visit thus a sick man; I am infinitely pleased at your coming this evening.

Janson. Why, how now, General? depending as usual! Come, let me feel your pulse. There is no fever about you, none whatever; fare well, feel well. Do not confine yourself to the house—take plenty of exercise: see what a delicious evening it is! Come and walk with me on the terrace. Nay, no resistance, I insist upon it

[*As Janson gently forces D'Enambuc off the stage, Marie is about to follow, when Loinvilliers stops her.*]

Loinvilliers. One word with you, madame.

Marie. What would you with me, Count?

Loinvilliers. I ask the liberty of condoling with you on the health of your husband; may you be always happy.

Marie. I have long observed, Count, the marks of esteem you have shown us.

Loinvilliers. Esteem is not the word for the feelings I entertain for you.

Marie. I understand you, Count, and this is not language that I should listen to, nor will I.

Loinvilliers. Nay, do not overwhelm with despair the tenderest and most submissive lover. That I love you is what I would say to you; I believed you might have loved me—that one day you might be mine; at least, I fondly hoped so. (*would take her hand.*) Marie!

Marie. Leave me, Count de Loinvilliers: I abjure and hate you; leave me, sir. [*Exit.*]

Loinvilliers. (*alone.*) This, then, is the end of all my hopes—of all the uneasiness I have felt for Marie D'Enambuc—the fruit of all my tenderness. “Leave me! I hate you!” (*utters an inarticulate accent of despair, and repeats, in different kinds of violent decla-*

motion—"Leave me! I hate you!") Yes, I am odious to her; I see it—I feel it; but I must decide on some step that shall make her mine. Some one comes!

Sentinel. (without) Who goes there?

Maubray. (without.) A friend.

Loinvilliers. It is the Marquis, Henri de Maubray, her first lover, on whose account she discards me.

Enter Maubray.

Maubray. I was told I should find Madame D'Enambuc here; it seems they have misdirected me.

Loinvilliers. Madame D'Enambuc has just now retired into the house. [*Maubray bows and exit.*]

This is my rival, but I need fear nothing from him. What though he loves her? I also love her; and is not the Count de Loinvilliers the most powerful man in Martinique? I can devise means to possess Marie D'Enambuc, and I will possess her, be it at any price. But here they come! I'll step aside, and hear what they say.

Re-enter Maubray and Marie, Loinvilliers retires to the back of the stage.

Marie. You have just arrived from France?

Maubray. The Saint Malo anchored but yesterday at Fort Royal.

Marie. And you are again about to sail—

Maubray. Almost immediately for St. Domingo; but before leaving, I wished to bring you some news of your family. (*hands Marie a packet of letters.*)

Marie. Till the Saint Malo puts to sea again, pray do the General and myself the honor of accepting the hospitality—the good Creole hospitality of our house.

Maubray. Unluckily, I cannot avail myself of your polite and kind invitation; I must be at Fort Royal by to-morrow morning.

Marie. So soon !

Maubray. To my great regret, I must take my departure hence in less than an hour.

Marie. I will not, then, press you to stay.

Loinvilliers. (*aside.*) Would that she had prevailed on him to remain !

Marie. This is the first time you have made a voyage to these islands ?

Maubray. It is. I have come here with the intention of settling. It is the ordinary resource of people, who, like myself, have no means of livelihood ; for I have lost the remnant of my fortune in the service of the king, my master.

[*Here Loinvilliers makes a gesture of surprise and joy, and exit.*]

Marie. You saw my sister, dear Louise ; she gave you these letters—

Maubray. *Marie!* Nay, frown not on me ! That tender exclamation springs from a painful, violent emotion, caused by the recollection, at this moment, of that only happy period in my life, when, a short time before your marriage with General D'Enambuc de Parquet, you were present at a ball in Paris, on making your first appearance in the world of gaiety. It was that day, when your father told you your hand was promised to me. All at that ball looked on you as my betrothed ; but oh ! how soon were our loves crossed by the inexorable ambition of your family.

[*During this speech, Loinvilliers re-enters, accompanied by Riccio, to whom he speaks in dumb show, pointing at Maubray ; after a short time, Riccio retires, leaving Loinvilliers at the back of the stage.*]

Marie. My grief was as bitter as your's, Henri, at the breaking of that tie ; but recollect that six years

have passed since then. I have lived consoled, calm, and happy. The past has been effaced from my memory; but now thoughts and feelings long buried in the most secret recesses of my heart rise up all powerful before me at these words of your's. Spare me, if you ever loved me, Henri, spare me.

Maubray. Ah! it was a strange change in your destiny, for you, a girl of fifteen, to leave your obscure home in the Rue Culture-Sainte-Catherine, to come to this end of the world to seek a fortune, and honours for which you had felt no ambition. Arriving here at Martinique, you found a whole household ready to receive you: ladies, pages, gentlemen, a whole court, a suite as numerous as that of a princess of the blood, whose title alone you wanted. Marie, I know that your youth, beauty, and charming qualities have gained for you the affection of the whole turbulent and mixed population of this colony. Of that affection I will not deprive you, nor of your peace of mind and happiness.

Marie. Oh! Henri! Would that we had never met!

Maubray. We meet to part as soon as we behold each other—perhaps for ever. In a few moments, I shall be gone—in a few days, I shall have landed at St. Domingo, whence I may never return; for I go there to take a part in the deadly war raging between the French and Spaniards. Farewell, Marie, farewell. We part, perchance, never to meet again.

Loinvilliers. Never! while I have life.

[Maubray kneels, and kisses the hand of Marie who enters the house weeping; Maubray stands watching her till she disappears, and as he is about to retire, Riccio and some Spaniards fall upon him by surprise, and binding him with cords before he is able to call out for assistance,

carry him off with violence; Loinvilliers then comes forward laughing.]

Loinvilliers. Never lover spoke a truer word, for never will they meet again; but not on the soil of St. Domingo, but here in Martinique, shall Maubray perish—perish in servitude more harsh and miserable than absolute slavery—that of an *engage*! But look! whom have we here? A scarlet mantle streams in the wind. 'Tis Cordillera, the Carib chief; he comes timely from his wild sweeps of waving grass. A fitting instrument, methinks, this native of the forest and the mountain, for the carrying out of my designs.

[Enter Cordillera, arrayed in feathers and scarlet garments.]

What brings you, Cordillera, to this stir of gathered pale-faced revellers?

Cordillera. This scene of light and life, and the cool shadows of this richly-stored garden bid welcome.

Loinvilliers. And welcome are you; to me, Cordillera, most welcome. Ah! that I could see you and your tribe racing, at will and alone, as once, the rugged flanks of Martinique!

Cordillera. But that will never be.

Loinvilliers. No; you are recreating fast before the advance of colonisation; a few more aggressions, and you and your's will be numbered with extinct species. Mark me, Cordillera: you must have often seen a multitude of birds and insects flying at the same time to the pitcher plant, attracted by the numerous little goblets, filled with sweet fresh water, and drinking at every open cup a refreshing draught. The pitcher-plant is Martinique; the thirsty creatures are the pale faces and the red-skins; but who takes the fuller draught? And who, at one time, quenched his thirst alone?

Cordillera. This is a beautiful truth. Since the coming of the pale face, Martinique has been like a parched place, and the dews have been insufficient to refresh the red-skin.

Loinvilliers. (*significantly.*) There is a rib which upholds the dome that cribs and cabins you.

Cordillera. The husband of the beautiful creature with the clear loving eyes here?

Loinvilliers. The same; the Lord Proprietor of Martinique—the owner of this dwelling—General D'Enambuc de Parquet. Now, throw wide open the sepulchre's mouth for this patriarchal man, bleached with age, and the pale face shall no longer share Martinique with you.

Corderilla. No longer?

Loinvilliers. Not if you obey my instructions. Deer and kangaroos shall roam alone with you, sylvan masters of this isle, the plains, mornes, valleys, and savannahs.

Cordillera. Ha!

Loinvilliers. Be guided by me. Let armed men surround this dwelling an hour hence; before the starry belt of night encircles yonder vault, break down the strongest fences of life. A man walks up and down that avenue: mark him now—it is the sentry. You must dispatch him, or he will frustrate all your designs. You see yonder pavilion; there a guard of soldiers will be lying calm and immovable in sleep; be not more merciful to them. Your other plans, you must yourself arrange.

Cordillera. Kill General D'Enambuc, say you?

Loinvilliers. If you would possess Martinique; but mind, and hurt not a hair of Marie's head.

Cordillera. You love, then, that beautiful daughter of the pale faces?

Loinvilliers. Cordillera, you can do nothing by yourself. Remember, your companions are, at present, far away; bewildered, it may be, among the intricacies of the forest. Go, find them; bring at least a hundred with you, and be heré again before the dews are falling.

Cordillera. The dew is falling now.

Loinvilliers. Away, then, at once; and let your speed outstrip the fleetest steed that ever scoured the plain.

Cordillera. The pale face has the strength of a quadruped, but the red skin, though not winged, can fly. [Exit.

Loinvilliers. He's off like an arrow! With what incredible celerity he bounds along! He will not fail me; and now I have to wait but for the time and the attack. I hear the pattering of rain-drops on the dry leaves; over the sea, a heavy storm is gathering: The fates assist me. [Exit; low thunder.

SCENE II.—A passage in the house at *Les Mornes*.

Enter Jem Irons and Nancy Gibbs.

Jem. Somehow or oder, Miss Nancy, I feel's any how but comfortable: a sort of creeping of my flesh, and a sinking of my heart, as if I was afraid, and trimmel:

Nancy. But, lor! Jem, where's the good of being afraid, and trembling? there's nothing to be afraid of:

Jem. I'm not so sure of dat, Miss Nancy—you shall hear. As I goes along de road to Fort Royal; wid massa's letter jus' now, I hab to cross de cliffs, where I was obligated to get off de mule, for he slipped and slided along like a goat, my dare frin,' and de path was steep and bery bad, and de sea wash up ober de path, and I was jus' on de edge of de cliffs hang'-in' ober de sea, and, to tell you de trut,' I feels myself

gritly relarmed, for de mule was ristic and hard-mouthed, and would go jus' as he liked, pull him as hard as I could, and besides dat, it was a queer sort of a place.

Nancy. Well, Jem—

Jem. Well, Miss Nancy, I was going down dis cliff, leading de mule, when, as I gets near to de bottom, I hears somebody say, "hem! hem!" bery loud. I looks around me, and I sees—

Nancy. What did you see, Jem?†

Jem. Why, a fellnr, de colour of brickdust, wid hair as bushy as a monkey. I know'd him well enough —'twas Mister Cordillera, de Carib chief, a standing in de cave by de sea shore, and holding a long bow in his hand. "Stop!" says he, in a big voice, dat mak' de cave ring, and down he comes to me. "Where is you going dis fine ebening?" says he. So I up and tells him I was going to Fort Royal. "Oh, ho!" says he, "dat's it, eh?" Den he says, arter a bit, "I s'pose you habn't had yer dinner yet?", "No, sir," says I, "I habn't had a chaw all day."

Nancy. Lor, Jem, did you say so, after the quantity of meat and drink you have had here this afternoon?

Jem. Dat's all, bery well, Miss Nancy; but patience me! Dere was a sight in de cave dat mak' my mouth water too sweet! Why, my dare frin', dere was turkeys, fowls, guinea-fowls, all picked, and ready for de spit, and, besides all dese, dere was a side of mutton and a ham hangin' up. You should have seen Mister Cordillera, how, when I told him I had had no chaw all day, he set some cole turkey and ham before me, wid plenty of yams and potatoes, and tells me to eat hearty. All de while he talks about massa, and de people who lib here, and asks when dey go to bed at

Les Mornes, and how many soldiers dey hab, and in whrt part of de house de General sleep; and when I tells him dat twenty thousand Caribs was a trifle to de soldiers here, who could shoot 'em and eat 'em too; he laughs; but I bery soon conbincees him dat what I says was de trut'. You should have seen jus' den how glum he looked, and how dim his eye growed. All dis while, he was puttin' more turkey and ham in my plate, and telling me to eat hearty.

Nancy. And I suppose you didn't eat?

Jem. I didn't eat! eh? 'Sblood! I made a hole in de vittels. I gotted, too, some drink, and when I were done, he says to me; says he, "I hope you hab fare well." "Oh! yes," says I, "berly well, I tank you." "Well den," says he, softly like and kindly, "when you return dis way, you can step in and get some supper;" and he pints wid his finger to de side of mutton, and winks his eye. "Bery well, sir," says I, "I'll be sure to come back, and tak' some of dat nice mutton wid you." "Be sure you do," says he, "for I shall respect you." Well, I wish him good bye for de present, and leading de mule out of de cave, I gets on his back and rides on to Fort Royal. When I gives my massa's letter, I starts off again, and along de way, "I'm bless," says I to myself, "if I don't eat some o' dat nice mutton belonging to dat chap, Cordillera;" but when I gotted to de cave, sure enough, my date frin', dere was no Mister Cordillera waiting for me, which was dam purbboking; for my ride hab gib me an appetite; and I feels bery hungry.

Nancy. Cordillera, then, had gone when you returned?

Jem. Gone! cuss de tief! and eberyting else. De mutton was no longer hanging up in de cave. Damn his vitals! Dere was neider de cole turkey nor de

guinea-fowls! "Umph!" says I to myself, "Mister Cordillera thinks to receive me, but tak' care I don't receive him." And away I goes; but I didn't tak' de straight path for home. No, no, I goes to Fort Saint Pierre, and I tells de garrison dere to be on de look out, for I spec' de tief was after no good here at Les Mornes. But cuss him! I rispect dey'll neber catch him. Nobwithstanding dey've laid hold of some of his crew, and took 'em off to jail.

Nancy. It strikes me, Jem, you behave' most ungratefully to your friend Cordillera, who treated you so well in the cave.

Jem. (knitting his brows.) Ungritfel! ungritfel, you say. What de debil he gi' me dinner for, but to 'tice out of me all I know about de General and Les Mornes, and den dis bery night, p'raps, he come and rob us all, or cut our throats, and dat's why I lost my chaw of de nice side of muttoo. No! cuss him! drot him! he'll some o' dese days get what he desaves—a sun-drying. Some of his gang, howsomeber, hab many a day 'fore dis got what dey deserve, for dey been hanged: I've seed 'em myself swinging in chains. Cha, cha, cha. *(laughs.)*

[*Jack Ballard without.*]

Jack. Ship a hoy! You black crafts, there! Ship, ahoy!

Jem. (exhibiting fear.) Helo! who is dis a-calling and a-coming here?

Nancy. Jack Ballard, the sailor, who is trying to reach us; he is tipsy. Hail him, Jem.

Jem. (shouting.) Ship, ahoy! massa snowball. Clap on more sail—make better headway—put your helm to starboard, and bear down on us. Dat's de s yle, eh, Nancy? Gib it him in his own lingo.

Enter Jack Ballard.

Nancy. Well, Jack, where are you now from?

Jack. Straight from Fort Royal, my pretty mess-mate.

Jem. And where you bound to, massa?

Jack. In search of the Marquis, Henri de Maubray, nigger. (*takes Nancy by both hands.*) Shiver my timbers, Nancy, but you're one of the nicest cruisers a-going.

Jem. I say, massa salt water fish—(*gets between Nancy and Jack.*) Ahem!

Jack. What means "ahem?"

Jem. It means dat Miss Nancy Gibbs is de sweetheart of Mister James Irons, black gen'leman; dat's what it means, Mister Jack fish.

Jack. Miss Nancy is going to give us a hand to lift our lazy craft on the beach, out of reach of the washing tide and the foul weather. Come, Nancy, hoist and hide our timbers in your bushes.

Jem. You don't anchor at Les Mornes to-night, young man.

Jack. Avast, nigger.

Jem. Avast yourself. Push a black gen'leman about, as if he were a hog'ead of sugar. Who and what are you?

Jack. Who and what am I? Why, I am what land lubbers call a sailor—a genius what talks boom-tackle, swears, drinks grog like a fish, boxes the compass, and tells which way the wind blows; and I am Jack Ballard, coxswain on board the St. Malo, first class frigate. You want me to haul off, but I don't budge tack nor sheet—save your breath to cool your porridge. I tell you, I don't go, and you may as well set your mind at ease on that point at once. I have no more dodge about me than the mainmast.

Nancy. And so you stop here till the morning, eh, Jack?

Jack. Ay, Miss Nancy, for the *Marquis de Mowbray* and me must ship together at sun-rise. Mowhap, this time to-morrow, we shall be running down the trades, among the niggers' islands here, with a smacking breeze on the quarter, at twelve knots an hour—whew! go away, salt water!—a dashing clipper, that *St. Malo*! And you, too, Nancy, you are a dashing clipper in your way, you are—sail like the devil—put the wind's eye out on a bow line—give you one point free, and off you are like a shot. We are old friends—*(Puts his arm round Nancy's waist.)* So then, let us go on board, and have a look at your craft, before t'other sail that's now gone about, and has followed in that 'ere black landlubber's wake, comes to anchor in your bay.

Nancy. What mean you? Who is about?

Jack. Lots of suspicious-looking coveys, with bows and arrows, and hatchets, prowling about the house and the grounds, and hiding themselves in the hedges and bushes.

Nancy. You don't say so?

Jack. Ay, ay, Miss Nancy, you should have hoisted signals afore this. No sooner I see'd 'em, than I put ship right about, and got under weigh for friends in distress. Hard a-lee! Jack Ballard tacks and stands in, I warrant.

Nancy. People about *Les Mornes*, at this time of night!

Jem. What will become of us all?

Jack. Brick-dust coloured chaps. It bodes summut ill when skulkers catch the breeze, and hide their ensigns; but fear nothing, sweetheart; we'll thrack 'em, should they mean mischief. The raw lobsters

here can attack everything, large and small—everybody, great and little; laugh at steel and gunpowder—never know what fear is—the world not wide enough to hold 'em. *[bell rings.]*

Nancy. There's missus ringin' her bell. I must leave you, Jack; by and bye, I'll see you again.

[Exit.]

Jack. *(calling after her.)* Holloa! Nancy! Don't leave us yet. Give us first a glass of grog, and then stow us away in the cable tier or shot-locker. No go; she's off like a shot—by this time out of hearing.

Jem. *(aside.)* Dere's no gettin' rid o' dis 'straw-dinary salt-water Jack-fish. He is more dan half seas ober already; I'll mak' him dead drunk. I'll gi'e him a dose of rum dat shall set him regularly on his beam ends. I'll play no end of tricks on him, for coming here to mak' love to Miss Nancy Gibbs. By gum! but I'll hab my revenge on him. *[Exit.]*

Jack. *(looking after Jem Irons, and rolling about the stage, as if tipsy.)* Hilloa! there! Pipe the side to the lubbers to man the gangway and haul us on board: bear us a hand here. *(moves, as if about to leave.)* Here we are, off at last, and away we go, with our stunsail tacks and skysail backstays, as taut as bars of iron, making fine headway, with all sails set. *(rolls towards the foot-lights.)* Port—hard-a port. *(staggers.)* Stand by—mind the weather-roll—heave to or I'll sink you. *(nearly stumbles against the wing.)* Here we are, close to the starboard quarter rails—slack the lee braces—round in the weather ones *(as he is turning round by the wing to leave the stage.)* Starboard the helm—hard-a-starboard. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.—Grand hall in D'Enambuc's house; gauze curtains drawn across the windows; Marie seated; Nancy stationed at her feet.

Marie. (sighing.) Nancy, I am stifled here; draw back that curtain.

[Nancy draws back the curtain.]

Nancy. (looking out of the window.) Missus, the sky looks black over the sea. There will be a storm to-night. *(remains at the window.)*

Marie. May heaven watch over the poor mariners! Oh, heaven! make him happy whom I may not see again, and let me forget the time when it was lawful for us to love each other. Oh! remove from me the thought that we were affianced to each other; that our loves were crossed by the aspiring wishes of my proud father. Have pity—have pity upon me!

[Here Nancy starts up suddenly, and remains motionless, with her eyes turned towards the garden.]

What is the matter, Nancy?

Nancy. Missus, it's strange, but there are red-skins here.

Marie. Red skins! *(aside.)* Then the roads are not safe from here to Fort Royal! Merciful powers! But I am silly; Maubray must have arrived on board his ship by this. *(aloud.)* You must be mistaken, Nancy; nobody is there. Why should these savages have left their great carbet?—what do they want here? Be at peace. Let down the jalousie.

Nancy. (leaning out to unfasten the cords, and letting the jalousie fall suddenly.) As I live, missus, I was not mistaken; there are red skins below.

Marie. Then we must give the alarm immediately. *(hastens towards the window.)*

Nancy. (throwing herself before her.) Keep back, missus, keep back; you will serve as a butt for some arrow. Be sure the red skins, who see a light outside, have their eyes fixed in this direction.

Marie. They come here for some treacherous purpose; they are about to attack us. Good heaven, have mercy on us!

Enter D'Enambuc and Loinvilliers.

D'Enambuc. Marie, you seem frightened; what's the matter?

Loinvilliers. Is there any danger?

Marie. A band of Caribs surround the house.

D'Enambuc. How can this be? Here are the keys of the garden gate—

Loinvilliers. And 'tis as impossible to get over the wall as to scale Fort Saint Pierre.

D'Enambuc. There is no fear of any one having treacherously opened the garden gate to the red skins. How think you, Loinvilliers?

Loinvilliers. Oh! 'tis impossible.

Marie. But Nancy has seen the red skins; they are here, under the windows.

D'Enambuc. You have been dreaming, Nancy.

Nancy. Pray heaven it be so, master. *(a blueish light is seen through the jealousies.)* By the next flash of lightning, you will see what is passing without, master, and that I was not mistaken.

[Thunder and lightning.]

D'Enambuc. *(after looking out of the window, suddenly dropping the jealousie, and pointing to an arrow in his sleeve.)* It's true. Here's a proof: There are at least a hundred beneath these windows. *(drawing out the arrow, and looking at the point.)* It's poisoned.

Loinvilliers, (aside.) If it had hit him, the wound would have been mortal.

Nancy. *(hiding herself behind the jealousie, and looking out, as a flash of lightning takes place.)* They

are even now going to attack the house, master. Look!

D'Enambuc. Marie, go into the gallery with Nancy; do not approach the window, nor make an attempt to see what is passing without. Promise me you will stay there; and wait with courage and resignation till all danger's past.

Marie. Ah! but you—you are about to expose your life.

D'Enambuc. It is my duty and my business.

Marie. But it is my duty to be near you—not to leave you.

D'Enambuc. Go, Marie; go and wait for me, and pray.

Marie. (*pressing his hand to her lips.*) Yes, I will obey you; and be assured that I will show no fear. I know you will save your wife. If you fall in defending me, let your mind be at ease; I will not fall alive into the hands of these wretches.

[*Here a horrible hurra is heard without.*]

D'Enambuc. Hark! (*a violent knocking.*) They are breaking down the great gate. To the portcullis, Loinvilliers, to the portcullis!

[*Exeunt Marie, Nancy, and Loinvilliers.*]

Enter Slaves in all directions, and among them Jem Irons.

Jem. By gum! Here's a fine state of t'ings for us all, my dare frin's. We shall ebery one be killed—ebery moder's son of us. If dese chaps catch us, dey'll do for us. Dey'll put us all to deat' by slow torture—empale us—tear out our bowels. Not dat I fear dat, nor any oder deat'.

Negroes. Oh! lard! oh! lard! (*to D'Enambuc.*)

Save us, massa, save us. You can, for you brave, mas-a.

D'Enambuc. Our lives are now at stake. We must all defend ourselves. (*supplies the Negroes with arms To some.*) Go to the vestibule. Keep yourselves in readiness to defend the passage. (*to others.*) Go to the windows on the first floor overlooking the garden. Fire on all who pass. (*to others.*) Ring the great bell—alarm the neighbourhood—rouse the militia—bring hither the garrison at Saint Pierre. Ah! Jem!

Jem. Iss, massa.

D'Enambuc. You are a fine brave fellow—as young and as strong as any of your comrades. Take this heavy musket, and kill as many as you can.

Jem. Iss, massa. Wid my own hand, I'll kill eb'ry one of dese c'ieves and raskels. Gib me a cut-las foo.

[*D'Enambuc hands him a cutlas.*
You'll see how I'll pursue and kill dese cannibals.

D'Enambuc. (*to Negroes.*) Let's be active. Come.

[*Exit with all but Jem.*

Jem. (*alone.*) Massa t'ink me a fool, I s'pose. Me fight! Not if I know it. It don't suit me. I'd a damn sight rader hab a chaw. So I'll jus' crawl to de kitchen, and hide meself in de safe, and eat dat fine fat shoulder of mutton dat Miss Nancy Gibbs put by on de sly for Mister Jack Ballard's supper. She t'ink I didn't see her. Cha, cha, cha! (*laughs, and sneaks off the stage.*

[*During this speech, a frightful and incessant clamour is heard without—the war-cry of the savages, and the sound of heavy blows.*

Re-enter Marie and Nancy.

Marie. Nancy, our lives are in the hands of hea-

ven; take courage, girl. The gate cannot long hold out against these blows. Hark! to those frightful cries! Would one not say we were surrounded by a legion of demons; but we must not be afraid of these horrid howlings. Noise cannot throw down walls.

Enter Janson.

Janson. Hav'n't I just been wakened by the most frightful noises? It strikes me we are going to have a busy night of it. *[Discharge of musketry.]*

Marie. Haste to the top of the stairs, doctor, and see what's passing below.

Janson. *(looking off the stage from the wings.)* Capital! They fired well that time! Half of those who fell will never rise again.

Marie. Do you see my husband, doctor? Tell me, if you see him.

Janson. He is sheltered behind the door like the rest of our people. They have fired through the vastistas, and the murderous—

[Another discharge of musquetry, followed by frightful cries without.]

Ha! hav'n't they swept the place clean this time! Heaven be praised! The alarm is given to the guard. We should hear musket-shots outside the garden gate, unless the post has been surprised, and the soldiers have had their throats cut, which is very possible.

Marie. But the negroes, doctor, the negroes! They will come to our succour.

Janson. But they have no arms, nor would it be safe to let them have them.

Marie. Oh! doctor; if it should enter the minds of the five hundred slaves to kill their overseers and come and join those wretches!

[Noise without; furious and precipitate knocking, followed by a noise, as of a door falling; cries of victory, followed instantaneously by cries of surprise and rage.]

Janson. The great gate has given way, but they have dropped the portcullis, which opposes its massive iron bars to the assailants. It will hold out longer than the gate. Blessed be he who made it so strong and solid. It moves no more than a rock to the blows of the wretches.

Marie. The alarm is given. They must have heard the report of our musketry. The drums are now beating from Tomazo to Fort Saint Pierre.

Janson. They will send us succour. The soldiers will soon cut into pieces these Pagans—these cannibals. We shall be saved!

Marie. May heaven hear you!

[Great tumult; thunder and lightning; cries of savages; firing of musketry.]

Enter Loinvilliers and D'Enambuc.

Loinvilliers. We have killed a great number, General. Dead and dying are lying in heaps at the gate.

D'Enambuc. Let us load our arms again, Count.

Loinvilliers. No succour can come to us: We are done for. The portcullis cannot hold out a second longer.

D'Enambuc. We must defend the other parts of the house. We are quite surrounded. Come.

[Exit D'Enambuc and Loinvilliers.]

Marie. The red skins! Here are the red skins scaling the walls! Oh! heaven!

Janson. Help!

Nancy. Mercy!

[Renewed tumult without. Negroes rush in and hide themselves in all corners; Marie stands up against the wall.

Enter Cordillera and Loinvilliers, meeting each other.

Loinvilliers. (to Cordillera.) On, Cordillera, you will find him in the gallery.

[*Exeunt Loinvilliers and Cordillera in opposite directions. A couple of Caribs, brandishing war-knives, get in by the window.*

Enter Jack Ballard, giving a long whistle.

Jack. Hilloo! Here's a breeze with these gulls and lubbers! (*rushes at the Caribs, and after knocking down one of them with his fists, turns upon the other.*) What's your game, cocktail? Belike you wanted, like a smuggling cruizer, as you are, to make off with this tidy little bit of a boat here, and to hide your black rag, as the old un is said to conceal his cloven foot and dragon tail, when he wishes to catch us poor seamen a-napping. But that 'ere cock won't fight. Come, come, sport your bunting, privateer.

[*Fights the Caribs with his fists, and keeps knocking them down alternately. Meanwhile, two more Caribs get in by the window; and seeing Marie, they pounce on her; and one of them, making a blow at her with his hatchet, seizes her by the hair. Just then,*

Re-enter Loinvilliers.

Loinvilliers. (aside.) Treacherous wretches!—
Marie! Marie! I'm here!

[*Fires a pistol; one of the savages falls; a desperate combat takes place between Loinvilliers and the other savage, during which Marie falls to the ground lifeless; Jack Ballard picks up*

the hatchet of the slain Carib, and drives off the two Caribs with whom he has been fighting; after receiving a wound, Loinvilliers kills the other savage; Janson hastens to Marie; leans over her, listening to her breathing.

Loinvilliers. (throwing himself on his knees before Marie.) She is dead! She is dead!

Janson. No, thank heaven! There is no other wound than a scratch on her shoulder. Excitement has caused her to faint. Look! she is breathing again—she is reviving!

Loinvilliers. Heaven be praised! I have, then, warded off the blow! I have saved her life. It is my life that has been sacrificed; but oh! happiness to have given it for Marie. Let her know it, sir, some day.

[As he is falling, Negroes rush forward and support him off the stage; renewed firing; D'Enambuc brought in wounded.]

Marie. (reviving.) Oh! my husband wounded!

D'Enambuc. Marie!

Marie. Here I am by your side, husband.

D'Enambuc. Marie, my dear Marie, come hither—closer still—let me touch you. *(lays his hand on her head, as if blessing her.)* Where is Loinvilliers?

Janson. Yonder, general, in the gallery.

D'Enambuc. Will you answer for his life, doctor?

Janson. As for my own.

D'Enambuc. Let him then come hither immediately.

Enter Loinvilliers, supported by a couple of Negroes. I have no time to speak to you Loinvilliers. The few remaining moments I have must be devoted to heaven.

Marie. (bursting into a cry of grief.) Oh! doc-

ior, say that my husband has many days—many long years to live. Say that he is not mortally wounded, doctor.

[*Janson droops his head ; Marie clasps her hands, and falls into a chair fainting ; Loinvilliers leans over D'Enambuc.*

D'Enambuc. Loinvilliers, you know what I told you this evening. I trust in your loyalty, in your courage. I leave you in my place. You will govern during the minority of my son, conjointly with his mother. You will preserve his heritage for him.

[*After a pause, during which he looks at Marie.*

Loinvilliers. Ay, that will I—(*aside.*) for myself, for some day I will marry your widow !

[*D'Enambuc dies.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A passage in the house at Fort Saint Pierre.*

Enter Jem Irons and Nancy Gibbs ; Jem brushing a boot.

Jem. I tell you dis, Miss Nancy, dat's takin' a liberty I don't allow. 'Member, we're not de friends we used to be, for I know'd well enough you're going to be de wife of Jack Ballard, if you ain't his wife already. But I wish you joy. You don't know half de comfort and de happiness you'll hab—you'll be only one out of some two or tree hundred wives.

Nancy. Don't talk ridiculously, Jem.

Jem. I don't talk, ridiculous, Miss Nancy. I speak upon my honour. I know de tricks of dem sailor chaps ; for I have hear'd wid my own ears, and see'd wid my own eyes dat dere's not a port in all de kingdoms of de world, where dey've not a wife.

Nancy. You carry the joke too far, Jem.

Jem. Well, now I tink a little furdere upon de matter, I don't carry de joke fur enough. Ineber see'd a sailor dat hadn't two wives at one and de same time, and all at once, one upon de one arm and de t'oder upon de t'oder arm. Shoudn't be at all extorished if Miss Betsy Braid was de t'oder wife of Mister Jack Ballard. Dat Jack such a debil of a tellur for de darkies!

Nancy. And so you would have me choose you for my husband!—you, Mister Jem Irons. (*bantering him.*) You, who never told a fib—you, who never bragged of great deeds you never did—you, who never pried into other people's affairs, nor minded your own business—you, who never were a glutton—never were a thief—never were a coward—never ran away from danger, eh! Jemmy? ha, ha, ha! (*laughs.*)

Jem. Well, Miss Nancy, when de Caribs stormed Les Mornés about dis time last year—

Nancy. (*laughing*) Ha, ha, ha! Brave Jemmy!

Jem. I fought all night long—

Nancy. With the shoulder of mutton in the safe, eh! Jemmy, ha, ha, ha! (*laughs.*)

Jem. (*with dignified gravity.*) I tell you dis, Miss Nancy, again and once more, dis liberty is beyond de bounds of courtesy; and de more so, as I neber do anyting farceical, to make myself a laughing block for you nor anybody else. You will do me de favor not to laugh.

Nancy. Oh! I sha'll split my sides with laughter. I shall—ha, ha, ha! (*laughs.*)

Jem. Miss Nancy, I hab de honour to wish you a bery good evening.

[*Bows with politeness, and exit with offended dignity.*]

Enter Jack Ballard.

Jack. Here we are again, my pretty messmate.

Nancy. Yes, here we are again, Jack.

Jack. Well, Nancy, it's a long time since I have loved you faithfully; and now I've lost ~~my~~ master, the good Marquis, Henri de Maubray, who by this time must have gone to Davy Jones's locker—heaven save his soul! (*rubs his sleeve across his eyes.*) And I cast my anchor here among the darkies for the future. What say you, Nancy, to our getting spliced?

Nancy. Well, Jack, you are a true-hearted, open-handed, clear-headed tar, and I have long loved you. But Jack—

Jack. What's in the wind now, Nancy?

Nancy. Who shall splice us?

Jack. Parson Du Tertre's true blue and no skulker. He never paid out a line to the devil since he has been steering yonder life-boat; and he always throws his net on the right side of the ship. He'll tie our painters together, Nancy, in a knot that Davy Jones himself can't untie. Say the word, and I'll bear away with the despatches for a commission as commander of this little craft, Nancy, that shall never run out. What say you to parson Du Tertre?

Nancy. Father Du Tertre's a good, old, quiet, sober, happy, inoffensive soul. We will go to him, Jack.

Jack. Agreed, Nan, agreed, and we'll be off at once. But let us first of all have a kiss of those pretty, pouting lips, Nancy. Eh?—what say you? Refuse your own Jack, Nan?

[*Nancy Gibbs exhibits a little coquetry, which ends in Jack Ballard kissing and hugging her; then extend both lovingly.*]

SCENE II.—*A large hall in Fort Saint Pierre. In the centre of the room a table, like a Secretary of State's, covered with letters and papers; a full-length portrait of General D'Enambuc over the door, surmounted by a kind of canopy, adorned by a trophy of arms, consisting of the helmet, gauntlets, and sword of the deceased, and by the fleur-de-lis flag of France. As the curtain rises, Marie, dressed in mourning, is leaning on a window that overlooks fortifications bathed by the sea; leaving the window, she seats herself before the portrait.*

Marie. A year elapsed yesterday since they laid thee in the tomb of the mountain, where the grass grows beneath the stones, and where thou art resting in undisturbed sleep. Thy memory rushes on my mind—the memory of those virtues which made me love and revere thee. Who can recount thy worth? Thou grewest like an oak on the mountain, which meets the wind with its lofty head. But now it is torn from the earth: who can supply the place of thee, D'Enambuc, my friend, my husband? I am disturbed—'tis Janson!

Enter Janson.

Janson. Are you still resolved, madam, to reject the offer of the Count de Loinvilliers? Have you well pondered over all the consequences?

Marie. I have, doctor. I know I have enemies who, blindly attacking my authority, try to create a rebellion; I know, too, that the Count de Loinvilliers, deeming himself necessary to repress these turbulences, has surrounded himself with troops, whom he calls his Spanish guard—a handful of adventurers. It is a long time since I have noticed all these under-hand dealings.

Janson. And yet you have not been able to prevent them. To whom do you trust to combat the influence of the Count?

Marie. Some one, perhaps, may come. (*casts a long look towards the sea.*)

Janson. Ah! Some one whom you expect?

Marie. Some one whom I have been long expecting. Yes, doctor, there is in the world one man whose loyalty and devotion are well known to me—a man whose whole life has afforded the noblest example of courage and fidelity and honour. My position must be known to him, and if he is not dead, he will come.

Janson. Heaven grant it may be soon!

Marie. Yes, he will come. (*aside.*) But if he should be dead!

Jem. (*throwing open the folding doors.*) The Count de Loinvilliers, madam.

Marie. (*to Janson.*) My Lieutenant General. He has a right to come here at all hours. Leave us alone, doctor. [*Exit Janson.*]

Enter Loinvilliers. (*Marie turning over the papers scattered on the table.*)

Well, sir, any news from France? The signal-flag hoisted for any approaching ship?

Loinvilliers. No, madam. The sea runs high: there is every indication of a hurricane. (*lightning.*) See! it lightens now. What vessel would dare approach the coast? Those at anchor here have long gone to take shelter in the bay of Fort Royal.

Marie. I hope we shall have no accident to-night, at sea or on land. The people on shore must, like the sailors, have taken precautions against the hurricane.

Loinvilliers. The colonists are so very indolent

and careless, it is necessary to take measures of precaution for them. There are some houses along the coast exposed to the violence of the waves: thinking it would not be prudent for the inhabitants to sleep in them to-night, I sent an order for all to come and take shelter here till the morrow.

Marie. You did right, Count. And the Negroes?

Loinvilliers. The Negroes! Oh! I never gave a thought about them. But that is easily rectified. (*sits himself at the table, and takes up a pen to write*) Does your charity, madam, extend also to the *engages*?

Marie. Undoubtedly: poor creatures, they are more to be pitied than the slaves, howbeit they're of the white race as ourselves.

[*Loinvilliers having written a line or two, rings impatiently a hand-bell on the table. Jem Irons appears immediately.*]

Jem Irons. (aside.) I wonder what de Lieutenant Gubbernor do here. He and Missus always gotted close togeder. I 'spec dey bot' in love. Jack Ballard and dis Lieutenant Gubbernor de two most devilish fellows after de women of my acquaintance.

[*Loinvilliers having sealed the letter, hands it to Jem Irons.*]

Loinvilliers. Take this letter, sirrah, immediately to the captain of my guard.

Jem. To Captain Riccio, massa. Iss, massa. (*aside.*) I wonder what he write to Captain Riccio about.

Loinvilliers. (to Marie.) Now, madam, you may make yourself easy as to the lot of these wretches whom your bounty protects, and who for a moment have disturbed your peace of mind.

Jem Irons. (who has been turning the letter about,

(and trying to look into it—aside.) Well, I'm bery sorry I neber could make out what letters sinnify. Here dey are, up and down—long and short—out o' size to one anoder, like kangar o's legs. Neber mind. As I goes along, I'll open dis bit o' paper, and get somebody to tell me what it's all about. I'm bery curious to know.

Loinvilliers. What are you muttering to yourself about, sirrah, and dawdling here for. Be off at once, and take that letter instantl to Captain Riccio.

Jem. Iss, massa. *(aside.)* Dat Count hab no purliteness whatsomeber.] *Exit.*

Marie. *(rising.)* Our business, I presume, Count, is over for to-day?

Loinvilliers. One moment more, I beseech you, madam. For myself personally, I ask this audience.

Marie. Go on, Count, I am ready to hear you.

Loinvilliers. *(seating himself by Marie, who, motionless, and with her eyes cast down, seems absorbed in attention.)* Madam, I have come here this evening to speak about a matter which rigorous etiquette has hitherto prevented me from mentioning to you. From the situation in which my soul is, heaven knows what a year's silence has cost me. But the moment has at length come, when I can claim the rights which were bequeathed to me by him, all of whose wishes have been sacred to you.

Marie. What rights, sir, and what do you mean? Heaven is my witness that I have made no promise.

Loinvilliers. I know it, madam. But it is not a promise made by you that I am about to claim. I come to tell you what passed a year ago, when the General ordered me to come to him in his dying moments. You recollect, madam, th t night of horrors, when the Caribs broke into Les Mornes. The Gen-

ral was at his last gasp; he stretched out his hand to me, and said: "Loinvilliers, you will govern during the minority of my son; you will preserve his heritage for him; and some day you must marry my widow."

Marie. (*starting up, and turning indignantly towards the portrait of the General.*) Count de Loinvilliers, heaven hears you.

Loinvilliers. Heaven and he, whose venerated image is here. No witness heard what I now tell you; but on my faith as a Christian, on my honour as a gentleman, it is the truth. It not this enough, that you should doubt me no longer, madam?

Marie. I believe you, Count, I believe you. Oh! heaven! he who was just and wise to all was then for once deceived.

Loinvilliers. (*smiling bitterly, but repressing his emotion.*) As long as your mourning lasted, madam, it was my duty to maintain peace, and not to make my hopes and sentiments known to you but by my actions. You must, however, have understood me, and seen the object at which I was aiming.

Marie. Yes, sir. I foresaw that I should soon have to choose between seeing you either my second husband or my mortal enemy.

Loinvilliers. (*starts, but coldly.*) You know my birth and fortune, madam. Neither is beneath the honour to which I aspire, and of which he who was your husband deemed me worthy. You now know his last wish, and the rights that he bequeathed to me. I await your answer.

Marie. Before making it known to you, I must collect my thoughts and pray. (*rising.*) To-morrow, sir—yes, to-morrow, you shall know my resolution.

Loinvilliers. (*aside.*) Let her form what resolu-

tion she may, I feel a tranquil satisfaction that she must be mine. [Exit

[During the latter portions of this scene, a storm is heard without.

Marie: (alone—shuddering.) Oh! the love of this man!—this man, whom I regard with fear and horror! (*remains absorbed in thought for a moment; then starts up restlessly, and listens to the tumult of the elements.*) How the storm howls without! and how the waves beat against the walls! I know not what is passing within me. I have, as it were, the presentiment of some evil. My mind is troubled with a thousand fancies; my heart beats as if I was near some great danger. But courage! courage! Let me recal the firmness of my mind. I need it in the difficult circumstances in which I am placed: 'tis of the real and immediate dangers that threaten me of which I must think. Would that Father du Tertre would come! I have such complete confidence in him. But here he is, and Janson with him.

. *Enter Du Tertre and Janson.*

Father, I have need of your counsel.

Du Tertre. Daughter, it is my duty to sustain and guide you in the painful moments of your life.

Marie. Father, aid me in this new trial. What I was afraid of has come to pass. The Count de Loinvillers has made propositions of marriage to me.

Du Tertre. And you have determined, daughter—

Marie. To reply by a refusal. [Exit

Du Tertre. Speaks the Count the truth, when he says it was your husband's wish that he should marry you?

Marie. Father, the Count may speak the truth. But my conscience tells me it is not my duty to obey

that last and terrible wish of my husband. He who is in heaven, and who sees to the bottom of my soul will not condemn me.

Du Tertre. Daughter, this is not a case of conscience. Before heaven, you are free. But the Count de Loinvilliers will bring your will under subjection by the strongest law. He knows well how to compel you to the marriage. You know not what is going on here, and the peril in which you are. There is a party against you—a formidable party, composed of those little folks who are everywhere the most numerous and the most seditious. What signifies it that the heads of the parishes are devoted to you, if their militias are ready to rebel against your authority? All these mutineers dread the Count de Loinvilliers, and those whom he calls his Spanish guard. Daughter, the day when the Count de Loinvilliers shall cease to be your Lieutenant-General—the day when he shall retire from your service, that day will you see your authority despised, and openly attacked, and, perhaps, you will be forced to resign your powers.

Marie. Never, father, never! No human force shall ever compel me to abandon the rights of my son. I will not quit my place so long as the King of France shall leave in my hands that power, the cares of which are killing me.

Janson. Madam, a little time ago you expressed a hope to me that you might be able to oppose some one to the Count de Loinvilliers—that you might have the aid of a man as firm, courageous, and able as himself. You would then have the means of subduing him.

Marie. Oh! that Maubray would come! But he will not come!

Du Tertre. There is now no longer any hope of

that. A whole year has passed since any news have been heard of him. We must pray for the repose of his soul.

Marie. (*shuddering and bending down her head.*) Yes; all is over.

Du Tertre. Let me convince you, daughter, of the peril of your situation, and the immense advantages of your marriage with the Count de Loinvilliers.

Junson. I must join with your father confessor, madam, in entertaining the same fears and giving you the same advice.

Marie. This much do I promise both of you, that I will not estrange the Count by a definitive refusal, but ho'd out hopes to him. (*retires to the window and looks out.*)

Du Tertre. (*to Junson, as they are leaving the stage.*) I thank heaven, that he has inspired us with words that have been able to convince madame. The determination she has just come to will save the heritage of her son, and secure the tranquillity of the colony.

Junson. Yes father; but it will, perhaps, cost her her life. [*Exeunt Junson and Du Tertre.*]

Marie. (*alone, and still looking out of the window.*) How the rain pours down! and the lightning tears the black sky! How! the chapel open, and people in it! They open the door—I see a light inside. Now the door is thrown back on its hinges! A man comes forth and stands on the threshold; he leans his arm against the wall, fatigued, poor fellow! apparently in pain! What! surely never! But yes; I know that figure!—that height!—that hair! Why keeps he his back to me? He turns round: I see his features! 'Tis Maubray! Oh! just heaven! it is—it is Maubray! [*rushes off.*]

SCENE III.—*A room in Fort Saint Pierre; storm without; thunder and lightning.*

Enter Jem Irons and Jack Ballard.

Jem. By the Lard Harry! how it thunder. Ain't we jus' a going to hab a fine night of it? Lots of wind and rain—lots of thunder and' lightning. Shouldn't be at all extonished if we see'd a hearthquake too.

Jack. Come, stow us away, you black landlubber, and hold your foolish palaver. What makes you think that we shall have a hearthquake?

Jem. 'Cos' it's jus' in de height of de rainy season, and I neber knowed a night like dis pass off without a hearthquake. [*Thunder and lightning.*]

Jack. Well, it certainly does blow big guns: What's a hearthquake like?

Jem. Why, like nothin' you eber see'd or felt. You can't sot down, nor you can't stand neider, but you go slipping and sliding about and staggering and shivering, and wondering what can frighten you so, 'till you feel turning yaller, green, and blue by turns, and inclined to hollar out from funk. All de while de groun' is movin' about hidder and tidder, fust up, den down; den on dis side, den on de t'oder, and in no manner o' ways. At las', you tummel down, and lucky if de house no tummel too. Ah! if you eber see'd a hearthquake, you have seed a sight as makes de marrer freeze in a fellar's bones.

Jack. What's the good of going on talking in this fashion, you stupid dog-fish. Haul in the sofa, and let us have a snooze till Nancy returns.

Jem. (*aside.*) A bright thought. I'll play off a joke on dis salt water Jack fish, and mak' him s'pose as how he is coming to an unlucky end. By golt!

I'll drive him from Martinique; and den Miss Nancy Gibbs will hab me any how.

[Exit; and immediately re-enters, pushing in a sofa, on which Jack Ballard reclines.]

Now, I'll go and bring wid me two or t'ree black gen'lemen, and frighten dis Jack 'Ballard out of his wits. *[Exit; thunder:]*

Jack. Blow me tight! But this is foul weather for these lubbers ashore. I don't half like that stupid dog-fish of a nigger talking so lightly of a hearthquake. I've known more unlikely things happen. But I feel uncommon sleepy. *(yawns.)* I'll just take a little bit of a snooze till Nancy returns, and then we'll be off together to the parson's to be spliced. *(yawns; falls asleep)*

Enter Jem Irons on tiptoe, beckoning.

Enter three Negroes.

Jem. He's fas' asleep, my dare frin's. Now for de hearthquake. We must all get under de sofa. Den do as I tell you jus' now, and we'll hab a laugh by'm by at Mis'er Jack Ballard, and mak' him t'ink for de present dat de day of judgment is come.

[Jem Irons and the Negroes get under the sofa, and shake it about violently; Jack Ballard awakes; loud thunder.]

Jack. *(catching hold of the sides of the sofa.)* Hilloa! Who's there? Pipe up all hands. Breakers a head! Avast! Belay! Surely this ain't the hearthquake that stupid dog-fish of a nigger was talking about.

[Thunder and lightning; Jem Irons and the Negroes increase the motion of the sofa.]

Split my topsails! But this sofa carries more sail than

ballast. Avast there! or I'm on my beam ends. Here's an awful end for a sinner of a seaman to come to. Avast, I say.

[The motion of the sofa is, during this speech, gradually increased, till Jack Ballard is finally capsized, and Jem Irons and the Negroes having rolled the sofa over him exeunt quietly.]

Jack. *(creeps from under the sofa.)* Split my top-sails!

Enter Nancy Gibbs.

Nancy. Why, Jack, what's the matter? *(laughs.)* You have not been sleeping under the sofa, have you?

Jack. No; but I have been fast asleep on the sofa. I can't say how long I snoozed, but at last I was roused by a horrible earthquake that skeered me a bit, and rolled me on my beam ends.

Nancy. An earthquake! *(laughing.)* You have been frightened, then?

Jack. Well, it was a little garish-like. Fort Saint Pierre's a queer place to be in, when the earth takes such a spree, as to be capering about, full of mischief; 'sides which, it's blowing great guns, and thunderin' and lightnin' awful. Howsomever, I've still a sound skin, and the danger is now all over.

Nancy. Why, Jack, there has been no earthquake. It's one of the monkey tricks of that mischievous little Jem Irons, I'll be bound.

Jack. If I know'd that for a sartainty, I'd tar and feather the lubber, I would.

Nancy. But we must lose no time. Jack, if we would find Father Du Tertre.

Jack. No, no, my pretty messmate; let us be off at once, and rouse his reverend honour. Come, give us your fis, Nan.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—*Interior of a chapel; Maubray and some of the Engages discovered; storm without.*

Maubray. Heaven be praised for this hurricane! It has got me sheltered in this chapel. Already do I see my deliverance at hand. It seems to me now that all the misfortunes, sufferings and miseries I have undergone for a year and more are coming to a close at last. Howbeit a bondman—a slave—the victim of the most frightful iniquity, my heart beats high with courage, hope, patience, joy! I am within the walls of the fort, the place where Marie, dear Marie, lives and rules, with a sovereign and independent jurisdiction. But how make her aware of my existence? What do to get into her presence? Ha! if I could but trace my name upon that wall! In the morning early, at the hour of mass, she will be here. She will see my name and, reading it, know I am living still—ay, and here in Martinique. A piece of burnt wood on the ground! Lucky accident! (*picks up a piece of charcoal.*) Sacred as the walls are, I will trace my name upon them. (*unseen by the other engages, writes "Maubray" on the wall.*)

Enter Riccio, driving in some Engages with his pike.

Riccio. Move on, fellows; I tell you, move on; or I'll drive an inch of steel into your lazy carcasses. Laggard still, knaves? Do you hear me? (*pushes in engages; glances at Maubray.*) Umph! that sullen fellow there, who never opens his lips. (*sees name on the wall.*) Ha! what have we here? (*to engages*) Approach, fellows. (*engages advance, timidly.*) Don't you hear, rogues? Come nearer. Who has dared to scribble with charcoal his Pagan name upon the walls of this sacred place? By my baptism! I promise him that he shall pay for it. What! all silent?

An Engage. (advancing and kneeling.) Pardon us, sir, pardon us; but, indeed, it is impossible we can be in fault this time. Not one of us knows how to read his name, much less to write it.

Riccio. Is it not Maubray himself who has written his name upon the chapel wall? *(to Maubray.)* Sneak, sirrah.

Maubray. (leaning against the wall with folded arms, calmly.) What can the writing of my name, here or elsewhere, matter to you?

Riccio. Oh, ho! That's your logic, is it? We'll soon see whether it's so insignificant an act.

Maubray. Hark ye, Master Riccio. I have already borne with your petty tyranny and brutal caprice too long. Beware how you provoke me.

Riccio. Beware how your contumacious tongue wars, saucy varlet. Remember the many painful days and nights you have passed in deep, dark dungeons, and dread the repetition of the punishment, and of the cartwhip, slave.

Maubray. I disdain your threats, now I'm in the walls of Fort Saint Pierre.

Riccio. I will imprison you.

Maubray. I am here to be made a prisoner.

Riccio. Downright rebellion, as I live! The fellow braves me.

Maubray. Ay, braves you with a bold, free tongue, and a firm, courageous heart.

Riccio. You shall die.

Maubray. I will die, rather than leave Fort Saint Pierre. Madame D'Enambuc shall see me—shall know of my position, and she will protect and defend me.

Riccio (aside.) And so she will!

Maubray. Talk of dungeons! of whipping! It

will be your and the Count de Loinvillier's doom, when Madame D'Enambuc, who knows not all—who knows nothing and suspects nothing of the atrocities that have been perpetrated in her name towards me, shall learn all. As soon as I shall be restored to my rights here in Martinique, and that position in society which is my due, justice shall be done. I swear it by the salvation of my soul!

Riccio. Stop, fine gentleman. You proceed too fast. I will have you arrested by my guard at once, and Madame D'Enambuc shall hear nothing of you.

Maubray. Think not of being my assassin, monster!—of imprisoning me in a dungeon to rot, with none to know of my existence. Seize me first. I have no sword! but, unarmed as I am, I will resist your violence.

Riccio. You would then seek—

Maubray. By every means in my power to glut my revenge upon you. In contempt of all law and of all justice, I have been deprived by you and the Count de Loinvilliers of my liberty—I have been covered with ignominy; I have been almost dragged to the foot of the gallows. You would see me die by the hand of the hangman.

Riccio. Or by the hand of your master, dog. (*fires pistol.*)

Maubray. Now may heaven save your soul. (*springs on Riccio.*)

Riccio. Would you murder me?

[*Maubray struggles with Riccio, whom he disarms of his dagger, and then, after a fresh struggle, stab him. Riccio falls.*]

An Engage. Oh! horror! Captain Riccio is killed.

Several Engages. What will become of us all?

Maubray. Many a time have I stricken an enemy to death upon a field of battle; but never till now did I ever kill man struggling with him hand to hand.

Enter Loinvilliers, Du Tertre, and Janson hurriedly.

Janson. We heard the report of pistols.

Loinvilliers. How has this disturbance been occasioned?

Du Tertre. What are these people doing?

An Engage. Do you not see, father? A man wounded; perhaps dying.

Loinvilliers. It is Riccio!

An Engage. From one moment to another he may die.

Loinvilliers. Shrive his soul, father.

Janson. Is he dying, say you? (*bends over the body.*)

Du Tertre. Who, then, has killed him?

An Engage. Maubray.

Du Tertre. (*to Janson.*) Is Riccio dead?

Janson. (*still leaning over Riccio.*) Not yet, father. He has received a wound from a dagger in the chest; but people sometimes recover from such wounds. (*to Engages.*) Bear him away.

[*Exeunt Janson, Du Tertre, and a few Engages bearing off the body of Riccio.*]

Loinvilliers. (*to Maubray.*) It is you, then, who are the murderer of my officer?

Maubray. Say, the executioner of a man whose life has been one tissue of crimes and foul assassinations. It is but retributive justice.

Loinvilliers. And I am now to have my justice on you, Marquis Henri de Maubray. Of little importance are your antecedents and your title. I see but

your crime and your condition—that of an Engage—a slave. I condemn you to the gallows. Ho! guards without!

Enter Guards.

Loinvilliers. Seize this man, and drag him off to instant execution. See it done without delay.

*[Guards seize Manbray and drag him off.
After they have done so,*

Enter Marie [hurriedly.]

Marie. (casting a quick and troubled glance at the Engages—aside.) All strange faces! He is not here then! Could I have been mistaken? (aloud.) Count de Loinvilliers, what man is that just led off?

Loinvilliers. Peter Baillardet; a ruffian and a murderer. The victim of his pernicious crime has just been borne away in a dying state, wounded by a dagger in the chest. Murder's a crime that cannot remain unpunished. We must make an example of this wretch.

Marie. (with consternation.) A condemnation to death! It is the first since I have been ruling here.

Loinvilliers. Justice must be done; he who kills must be killed.

Marie. But has the unfortunate man accomplished the crime? You speak of wounds.

Loinvilliers. If he has not, it is an engage who has lifted his hand against his master. Had he but touched him, it would have been enough for him to be hanged.

Marie. Is such a dreadful example necessary?

Loinvilliers. Ay, madam, for the maintenance of order on the plantations, for the tranquillity of the colony, and for our own safety. The slaves and the engages tremble before us whites, to whom they belong; yet they are fifty to one. What would become of us, ma-

dam, if, some day, they were no longer restrained by the fear of punishment?

Marie. Yes, I know there must be neither mercy nor pardon for the guilty. Let justice be done. (*signs a paper handed to her by Loinvilliers.*)

Loinvilliers. I, as your Lieutenant-General, madam, will see that this is carried into immediate execution.

[*Exit, followed by engages.*]

Marie. (*alone.*) What if this man were Maubray! I could not have been mistaken. It is impossible. Count de Loinvilliers! Count de Loinvilliers; You are playing with me some desperate game: I fear of more than deceit—iniquity! But whom have we here, creeping along so cautiously in this direction? It looks like a maroon negro. Perhaps, poor fellow, he comes to ask pardon of me; he shall have it. He leaves the gallery—makes towards the chapel—he is here.

Old Negro. (*appearing at the door.*) Missus, a poor white send you dis.

(*Throws into the chapel a purse, which Marie picks up with surprise.*)

Marie. What is the meaning of this present? A dollar! The impression effaced! And on it is scratched Maubray! Who gave you this?

Old Negro. (*prostrating himself before her.*) A poor white engage, missus, whom dey hang for having hit' his hand again' his massa and kill him.

Marie. An Engage! The Engage of Captain Riccio?

Old Negro. The same, missus.

Marie. This moment, in this chapel, he dealt the fatal blow?

Old Negro. Missus, he did.

Marie. You were here?—you saw all? You know Maubray?

Old Negro. I know him, and a fine brave fellow he is. We have work together. When de guards carry him off, I follow him through the courtyard. On him way, he ask to speak to de “Little Queen,” and when dey tell him you were not to be seen, missus, he gib me dis, and I promised to bring it to you. [*Exit.*]

Marie. It is Maubray, then! Maubray who is about to die! Maubray who is, perhaps, already on his way to the place of execution! Oh! let me hasten to his rescue, or he is lost for ever! [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—*A small apartment; loud knocking without; Jack Ballard without.*

Jack. Holloa! your riverend honour; is your riverend honour within? Holloa, holloa!

Enter Jack Ballard and Nancy Gibbs, meeting Father Du Tertre, who enters hurriedly.

Du Tertre. What is the meaning of all this racket?

Jack. What’s in the wind, your riverend honour, tha you didn’t answer my signal, when I banged at the door? How did you know but I was in distress?

Du Tertre. Well, young man, what do you wish? Be pleased to dispatch your business, as I am engaged.

Jack. Here’s my business, your riverend honour. Do you see that paper? (*shows a document.*) There’s my discharge from the bachelor’s lugger. I want you to give me a commissson. I’m going to enlist in the matrimonial service. Nancy and I are here to be spliced.

Nancy. Yes, father, we have come to you, if you please, to be married.

Du Tertre. Good. Let me see your license, young man.

Jack. Here it is, your riverend honour. (*hands paper to Du Tertre.*)

Du Tertre. (*looking at it carelessly, and putting it in his pocket.*) I will perform the ceremony for you shortly, and you and Nancy will then be man and wife; and I am sure there will not be a happier couple in Martinique.

Jack. No fear of that, your riverend honour.

Du Tertre. But, come, before we go—it's my unvarying custom, young man—you must have a glass of wine. I always treat my stranger guests so. (*calling.*) Jem!

Jem. (*without.*) Iss, massa.

Enter Jem Irons.

Du Tertre. Bring in the decanter and glasses.

Jem. Iss massa. (*aside.*) I knowed dis custom of de ole man bery well. So I've been and emptied de Madeira out of de bottle, and filled it wid anti-matrimonial wine. De ole man neber drink hisself; nor Mister Jack Ballard, nor Miss Nancy Gibbs neider will neber find out de difference. (*laughs.*) I guess de vile liquor of de debil's imp, de apot'ecary, will mak' 'em faint and dizzy, gib 'em 'pasms, cut deir bellies, and mak' 'em puke up deir hearts. Den let 'em go to de church, and get marry if dey can Cha, cha, cha! (*laughs.*)

Du Tertre. (*gaily.*) I am resolved you shall both leave me in very good spirits. [*Exit*]

Jack. Ay, your riverend honour, we have every reason to be happy.

Du Tertre. Nay, you cannot fail to be so under the circumstances. But here comes Jem with the wine.

Re-enter Jem with a decanter and a couple of glasses.

Come, Jem, fill the glasses.

Jem. (aside.) At present de hearts of bot' Miss Nancy Gibbs and Mister Jack Ballard merry, and break out in laugh and glad talk. But by'm by dey'll bot' be silent; and de step of Miss Nancy Gibbs become less light and skipful. Here goes.

[Fills the glasses, and presents them to Jack Ballard and Nancy Gibbs.]

Jack. (taking a glass and making a leg.) Here's my respect to you, your riverend honour. *(tosses off the contents of the glass at one gulp, and smacks his lips.)* That's a nor'-wester stiff enough to float grape-shot, your riverend honour. Come, Nancy, drink up.
[Nancy drinks.]

Jem. (aside.) Now for de fun. Cha, cha, cha!
(laughs aside.) *[Exit.]*

Du Tertre. I must now leave you, but I will be with you again in less than a minute. *[Exit.]*

Jack. I say, Nancy, that's rather rum tippie of the parson's.

Nancy. I never tasted such queer Madeira in my life, Jack. It doesn't agree with me at all. I begin to feel uncommonly faint and feeble; a fit of sickness is rapidly coming over me.

Jack. I can't say as how I don't feel queerish myself.

Nancy. Oh! do let me lean on your arm, Jack. I can't stand steady. Dear Jack!

Jack. Don't pipe, Nancy. There's mutiny on board. Three feet of bilge water under my hatches, and the pumps won't work.

Nancy. (putting her hand to her head, whiningly.)
Oh! Jack, Jack!

Jack. Don't blubber now, *Nancy*. Split my topsails, how the sea begins to roll! *Nancy*, I shall founder. I know it, and I shall be laying like a harpooned porpoise, rolling on my beam ends on these shoals in sight of port. *Nancy*, can't you hoist a signal of distress?

Nancy. *Jack*, I can't go any farther. I'm sick; oh! so sick.

[Both become seized with a fit of retching; and, amid mutual exclamations of "oh! I'm so sick" — "split my topsails." &c., exeunt.]

Re-enter Jem, meeting Du Tertre.

Du Tertre. Well, *Jem*, where are these young people?

Jem. Sick, massa.

Du Tertre. Sick!

Jem. Iss, massa, and gone home; bot' taken together puking.

Du Tertre. *Moses*—and—*Aaron*! What mystery is this? *[Exeunt hurriedly, Jem laughing.]*

SCENE VI.—*Interior of a prison; Maubray discovered kneeling, as in prayer.*

Maubray. (rising.) My heart is more tranquil; I feel well now. Heaven! thou hast granted me a moment's respite from all my variety of tortures in this day of bitterness and trouble. But a few seconds back, it seemed to me as if thick darkness had formed itself about me, and weighed down this heart, overwhelmed with a thousand agonising emotions. Plunged into a dungeon! awaiting every instant to be called forth to a death of ignominy! And yet all the while almost within ear-shot of *Marie*—*Marie*, who loves me even as I love her, and would save me, were

she 'but aware of my position. Oh! 'tis horrible. But methinks she now knows it; and something, like my conscience, unseen but not unheard, whispers, "Heaven has in store for thee some great happiness."

Enter Cordillera, creeping in at a window.

Maubray. Ha! who art thou?

Cordillera. The chief of the Carib tribes in Martinique. Fear not Cordillera.

Maubray. And thou comest—

Cordillera. From the tree beneath which was my mother's ajoupa; from the forest, where the red-skins had their great carbet.

Maubray. Why dost thou leave thy kindred to seek me?

Cordillera. To save thy life, if it is possible.

Maubray. Thou know'st me, then?

Cordillera. I pity thee, and hate thine oppressor, the Count de Loinvilliers. (*shudders.*) Oh! when I think of that horrible massacre of my tribe. 'Twas at Vauclain: women, children, old men—all, all killed: Not a trace left of our great carbet! The fire passed over everything. There are merci ess men among pale faces as among red skins—among Christians as among idolators.

Maubray. Speakest thou of a massacre?

Cordillera. Ay, of a fearful massacre, executed by the orders of the pale face, who should have befriended us, above all others of his kindred—the Count de Loinvilliers.

Maubray. Ha!

Cordillera. He it was who instigated me, some twelve moons back, to take my tribe to Les Mornes, and murder all but Madame D'Enambuc.

Maubray. Thou art dreaming, man. Villain as he is, he is not so foul a monster.

Cordillera. Listen, pale face. The bribe offered for the crime was the restitution of Martinique to me and mine. The deed was done; but with unparalleled treachery, the Count de Leinvilliers, pretending to avenge the lady who now rules this isle for the injuries done her by the red skins, strove to exterminate us all; burnt our houses—killed our wives and children. To this day he hunts us down with bloodhounds.

Maubray. Ferocious monster!

Cordillera. Say cold-blooded villain: he has no more mercy for Christians than idolaters. Hark! a voice!

Marie. (*without.*) There is a light within the prison. Oh! heaven! he is there!

Maubray. The voice of Marie! she comes to save me! [*knocking without.*
(*to Cordillera.*) Begone! Conceal thyself; she must not see thee here.

[*Cordillera conceals himself under the cloth of Maubray's couch.*

Enter Gaoler, accompanied by a guard of Spanish soldiers, who station themselves at the upper end of the stage.

Gaoler. Prisoner, here is Madame come to see you.

Enter Marie.

Marie. Maubray!

Maubray. Marie! dear Marie! Just heaven! Is it a vision?

Marie. 'Tis I—'tis I, Henri! I come to save you. Oh! blessed be heaven! for allowing me to arrive in time. Thank Him! thank him! Henri. (*to the guard of Spaniards.*) Retire. There is now no longer any one here for you to guard.

A Guard. (*hesitatingly.*) Madame, we have to answer for the prisoner to the Count.

Marie. If I take that on myself, you will have to give no account to my Lieutenant-General. Go. (*As they are going.*) Stay. Take off the prisoner's chains. [*They obey her.*

1st Guard. (*as they are retiring.*) What is the meaning of all this?

2nd Guard. Why, Madame means to save the life of the convict here.

1st Guard. Well, well, Madame could not do better. [*Exeunt Guards.*

Marie. Oh! with what ardent emotion I gaze on you; with a heart full of how much pity mingled with what immense joy! Yet I recognise but slowly those features; that beautiful hair and that noble bearing which many miseries, sufferings and ignominies have not changed.

[*Maubray kneels and kisses her hand.*

Rise, Maubray, rise. Your hand, and come with me. Lean on me, Henri. Oh! how you must have suffered.

Maubray. Ay, intensely.

Marie. Ah! and so have I.

Maubray. (*pressing to his heart the hand that supports him.*) Oh! Marie! 'tis you, Marie! (*as if succumbing to a violent emotion of joy, stops and looks at her.*)

Marie. Henri, you are pale, Henri!

Maubray. It is a momentary faintness. Yet but now in the face of death I was calm; my heart beat

not fast. I trembled not; now I am faint. Oh! Marie, this unexpected, this great happiness is beyond my strength; I succumb to it. Marie, I am weak. I fear dying, now I would live. But know you that I am condemned—condemned to an infamous death; that the instruments of punishment are ready, and that I have but a few moments more to live?

Marie. I know all; but I am here. Now tell me. Things have occurred of which I am ignorant, and of which you alone can give an account. Say, how is it that I find in so dreadful a situation an excellent gentleman, one of the bravest and most faithful servants of the King of France? How is it that, in your misfortunes, you did not address yourself to me, who rule here?

Maubray. Because I could not approach you—because I have been a victim of the foulest misdeeds—of the most flagrant injustice.

Marie. Proceed.

Maubray. The recital of my miseries and sufferings will appear to you scarcely credible. The day when I took leave of you at Les Mornes to return to Fort Royal, Riccio seized me, by force! I have since had reason to know, by the orders of the Count de Loinvilliers. The next day, after the St. Malo had sailed, your Lieutenant-General called upon me, through one of his agents, to furnish proofs of my resources for living as a free man in the colony. My goods and papers were all on board ship; I could give no proofs of what was asked me. Thereupon I was arrested; condemned without appeal, like a malefactor—like a vagabond, who lands at any of these islands, and they bought me—yes, I have been sold. Riccio, my master, carried me to a plantation at Cape Palmistes.

Marie. And you did not protest against this horrible violence? And you did not address yourself to me? Not a letter; Not a single syllable!

Maubray. Could I write? A letter! How could I trace it? With my blood—upon a leaf? On the bark of a tree? Even then, it would not have reached you. No, no, I wished—I hoped, rather—by some stratagem to get into your presence. But I was closely watched. Twice I was taken and carried back to the plantation. (*bare his arm.*) Behold these furrowed wounds! They are those of irons—of the lashes of the whip of a slave-driver!

Marie. (*shuddering.*) Ah! you were more to be pitied than the blacks.

Maubray. True. The wretch who purchased three years of my life treated me worse than his slaves. What mattered it to him if, on the day of my emancipation, my health was entirely ruined, and death ensued from my sufferings. He had to give no account of the measures he adopted to force his *engages* to labour and to obedience. He inflicted on me the same chastisement as on his negroes. Oh! the frightful mortality on those estates cultivated by individuals placed in my mixed condition! I was resigned to die soon under the tortures of the whip and the dungeon. I no longer hoped for my deliverance. At length, after a year's suffering, accident came to my relief. Last night, everything gave presage of a fearful hurricane. The *engages* received orders to shelter themselves in the fort. Riccio brought us here, and there being no room elsewhere, they placed us for the night in the chapel.

Marie. And there for the first time I saw you. Ah! the finger of Providence is visible in all this.

Maubray. With a trembling hand, I wrote "Mau-

pray" on the chapel wall, to place my name before your eyes, and warn you of my existence. Riccio shortly after entered—hush! footsteps. The Count comes to order me to execution.

Marie. Which he shall never do while I rule here.

Maubray. Did I not know he was my mortal enemy, because he loves you, Marie, I should deem his conduct that of a madman.

Marie. It is that of a villain. Hush! I would understand more of his intentions. [*Drawing of bolts.* He comes. I will conceal myself.

[*Hides herself behind one of the pillars.*

Enter Loinvilliers, accompanied by Guards.

Loinvilliers. Prisoner, your last hour has struck.

Maubray. Yes, of freedom from your tyranny, and of shelter in this fortress. To-night, I take up my abode in Fort Saint Pierre.

Loinvilliers. (*laughing.*) In the noose of the halter, dreaming fool. The hangman waits for his victim now. Luckily justice is done in Martinique to assassins; and when the whips of overseers and the truncheons of galley-masters cannot keep vagabonds in order, we have the dungeon and the scaffold.

Maubray. Vagabonds!

Loinvilliers. Ay, what are you *engages*, but pilferers and throat-cutters, footpads and murderers, who unable to live any longer in France, under penalty of swinging on the gallows, come to settle here in our colonies. One knows not who you are, or where you come from. You have ever a thousand tales to tell of your origin, and not one document to prove what you advance.

Maubray. Hark ye, Count de Loinvilliers. Standing, as you think I do now, with one foot in the

grave, I scorn your insults, even as I defy your authority. Think me no longer in your power; beware that you are not in mine. Madame D'Enambuc knows all. I have had recourse to her authority. And she who never denies her protection to any *engage* too severely oppressed by his master will not fail to protect me.

Loinvilliers. You know yourself to be an assassin.

Maubray. I defended my liberty from a tyrant—my life from a murderer; in their defence I slew the creature.

Loinvilliers. I refuse to parley with you farther. Guards, away with this man; carry him off to instant execution.

Maubray. (*struggling with the guards.*) The sentence which condemns me is unjust and illegal.

Loinvilliers. To whom will you appeal? What tribunal has the right to set aside the sentence which condemns you? The jurisdiction of the magistrates of this colony is independent and sovereign. It is one of our most beautiful privileges. All the inhabitants would rise, if necessary, to defend it, and to see the law executed.

Marie. (*in a proud tone, as she comes forward and extends her hand to Maubray.*) But, Count de Loinvilliers, you forget my right, which is to protect and to defend.

Loinvilliers. (*aside.*) What! Madame D'Enambuc.

Marie. You forget my most beautiful right, that of granting pardon, when human justice has condemned.

Loinvilliers. Indeed, madam, you can save this man from the gallows.

Marie. Marquis Henri de Maubray, to-morrow

you shall have your letters of pardon.

Maubray. (*kneels and kisses the hand of Marie which is extended to him; then as he rises, aside.*) I have looked on death with a calm eye; but my soul, which I deemed firm, is stricken down by its present excess of joy. It is not life alone I have regained, but the hope, the certainty that Marie loves me.

Loinvilliers. (*in a firm, loud tone.*) Madam, your sovereign authority can reverse sentences. But in this case, the condemnation is just and complete. Behold this document. (*Draws from his bosom the death-warrant, signed by Marie.*) I act upon it as your officer: if necessary, will justify my deeds by it to the King of France. This man dies. Even as your power goes not so far as to reinstate him in public opinion, (*in the eyes of all he is an assassin*) so can it not force me to depart from this final order of your's.

Marie. (*recoiling a step.*) You will not think of acting thus rebelliously, sir?

Loinvilliers. I will not suffer men in Martinique to cut each other's throats in the fashion of this bravado, unpunished.

Marie. You! Guards, arrest this man.

[*Guards remain quiet.*]

Loinvilliers. (*laughing scornfully.*) You would not have men of my own guard arrest me! I have but to lift my finger, and they would arrest you, madam.

Marie. (*aside, bewildered.*) Alas! it is too true. I rule in Martinique but by sufferance. Oh! my poor lost husband. Is this the substitute for Gorcelas? The man who was to preserve my rights, and your heritage for your son?

Loinvilliers. The heads of your own household would rebel against you; the captains of the parish

of Precheur, Carbet, and Lamartine; your Commandant, La Fontaine, Heron, Vigeon, and Sigalez. It is my prudence, madam, that alone restrains them. Fear to excite them to a revolt by pardoning an *engage*, the murderer of his master. Captain Riccio is dead!

Marie. Heaven save his soul!

Loinvilliers. Guards, away with your prisoner.

Marie. (*falling on her knees.*) Behold me at your feet, Count de Loinvilliers. Upon my bended knees, I do implore the life of the Marquis, Henri de Maubray.

Loinvilliers. Never, madam, never. This much, however, will I grant. He shall not be strangled, like a felon, but as an officer, he shall die the death of a soldier.

[*Motions to the guards; who conduct Maubray off the stage; he follows slowly.*]

Marie. (*clasping her hands in despair.*) They will shoot Henri! And I—I cannot save him. Oh! heaven! imbue me with fresh courage: let not my strength and hope in thee fail. Be my counsellor. Thou alone who knowest the secret and profound sorrows of my soul, can'st assist me out of these perplexities—this bitter trial. Show me justice, truth, my duty. I am losing my senses; I have no trust in myself. Oh! is there no one who can aid me?

Cordillera. (*starting up.*) I can and will, lovely daughter of the pale faces.

Marie. A Carib speaks, but it is the voice of my guardian spirit.

Cordillera. Be of good heart, dear lady; be of good spirits. I will avenge you, and save your lover. The tyrant pale face with the malicious heart, who

would murder him, has betrayed and wronged me, and shall die. Follow me. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE THE LAST.—*Open country; in the perspective a range of undulating mountains and the sea terminate the horizon. A file of soldiers and a crowd of people collected.*

Enter Jem Irons and Old Negro.

Old Negro. Poor Nancy!

Jem. Nancy who, my dare frin'?

Old Negro. Nancy Gibbs, dat Fader Du Tertre marry dis ebenin' to Jack Ballard, de sailor.

Jem. Well, I 'member; but why pity Miss Nancy, my dare frin'?

Old Negro. 'Cos she was tak' sick dis bera ebening' wid Jack Ballard, and put under de care of Doctor Janson. They bot' suffer much; but de worst part of de tale is dat dey leen goin' to shoot Jack's massa. 'I will almost turn him brain when him hear of it. Look where him come.

Jem. And jus' as I respected, wid a couple of wives, Miss Nancy Gibbs and Miss Betsy Braid.

Enter Jack Ballard, accompanied by Nancy Gibbs and Betsy Braid.

[Drum rolls.]

Enter Maubray, followed by Loinvilliers, Janson, Du Tertre, and others.

Jack. May I be keelhauled for a lying lubber if I don't know that figure-head! Nancy.

Nancy. Jack.

Jack. Why, that's my master, the Marquis Henri de Maubray, whom I thought gone to Davy Jones's locker;

[Maubray kneels down for execution.]

Thunder and lightning! What does all this rumpus mean?

[*Marie rushes in, and kneels at Loinvilliers' feet.*

Marie. Oh! Count, I will not believe you capable of such malignity. You cannot, will not kill the Marquis Henri de Maubray. Spare me his life, and ask of me what favor you will, I grant it to you.

Jem. (aside.) Look at Jack Ballard, how he stand glued to de spot, n-ber stirring a morsel, his mouth gaping like a couple of saw-mills, and his breath coming and going as thick and as hot as de fumes out of a baker's oven.

Old Negro. (aside.) He is struck all of a heap.

Loinvilliers. (to Marie.) Give me your hand in marriage, and I spare his life.

Marie. Will nothing less than that content you?

Loinvilliers. Nothing.

[*Marie hides her face in her hands.*

I see 'tis useles. Maubray dies. Soldiers, present.

[*As the soldiers level their muskets, Marie utters a loud scream, and throws herself before Maubray; Jack Ballard springs forward, and snatching his sword from Loinvilliers, throws himself into a fighting position before Maubray and Marie.*

Jack. No, that I'm damned if you do, you tall, hairy, bony lubbers, come on. I'll make you all jig, and whirl, and bob about, and cut as many capers as would sauce a leg of mutton for a month. Come on, I say, come on.

[*Here Cordillera rushes in with a band of Caribs.*

Cordillera. (to Loinvilliers.) My hour of retri-

bution and revenge at length has come. Pale face, think of thine own safety.

Loinvilliers. (to soldiers.) Hew down this savage wretch; remove that mad sailor.

Cordillera. Hear me first. The late lord of this isle died through thy treachery: we leagued ourselves together to assassinate him

Loinvilliers. (to soldiers.) Cut him into pieces.

Cordillera. Hear and rave. What was my recompense? Oh! not this pleasant land I loved so much; the lives of all my kindred was my reward. But their calm spirits look down upon this day of blood; watch my actions, and call out for vengeance. My brethren join with me in the holy sacrifice I am about to offer to our gods, who pour their blessings on you son and daughter of the pale faces. (*pointing to Maubray and Marie.*)

Loinvilliers. Soldiers, drive off this savage wretch. Fire on him and his tribe.

[*Soldiers fire; Caribs return the salute; a combat, in which the Caribs overcome the soldiers; Cordillera, who has been struggling with Loinvilliers, fells him to the ground, and grasps him by the throat.*]

Loinvilliers. (on his knees.) Mercy!

Cordillera. The same thou showedst to my kindred. 'Tis this. (*stabs him.*) [*Loinvilliers dies. (to Marie.)* Behold the proof of my devotion to you; behold him powerless who filled thy life with grief and trouble, and behold thy lover free!

[*Approaches Maubray, unbinds his eyes, and taking him to Marie, places his hand in her's.*]

Marie. (letting go of Maubray's hand, as if re-

covering from sensations of horror.) Good people, the Comte de L'Anuvilliers has fallen a victim to his crimes. For a long time past, he has been hostile to me; fomented plots; sought to deprive me of the seignior's of this isle; devised my husband's death; enslaved, imprisoned, and condemned to death this noble gentleman, whose only crime was that he loved me. This Carib chief has avenged himself and me in sending to his last account this wicked man, whose doom is just!

[People shout; Marie turns to Maubray, and takes his hand.]

Free, and mistress of my hand, I cannot do better than marry the man of my choice.

[People renew their shouts.]

Maubray. *(to Marie.)* I have forgotten all! I am happy!

Marie. Happy? Together for ever!

[Curtain falls.]

THE END.

